

Dr. Guss Describes Progress and Problems in Breeding at Atlantic Day

Atlantic Breeders Cooperative officials reported the best turnout ever at the firm's annual Atlantic on Parade Day Wednesday at the headquarters at 1575 Apollo Drive, Lancaster.

Key attractions were a chicken barbecue dinner and a chance to see the firm's outstanding bulls. About 2,700 persons were served chicken barbecue.

Visitors were from all over Pennsylvania including a bus load from Mercer County. Some breeders from out of the state from whom Atlantic has purchased bulls were on hand to tell farmers how to use the bulls.

There were also exhibits and some guessing contests.

Dr. Sam Guss, Penn State University extension veterinarian, talked about breeding problems, particularly emphasizing the importance of good management, health programs and balanced feeding.

He recalled that artificial insemination was developed in the late 1930's as a means of im-

proving herd fertility and controlling diseases such as brucellosis, vibriosis and trichomoniasis.

In the early days of AI, it was not considered as a means of improving type and production of dairy cows.

While artificial insemination has proven successful in helping control disease, it has also resulted in helping to increase size and production of dairy cows. These changes in breeding, as well as other changes within the industry, have helped cause the problem of infertility to emerge again, Dr. Guss said.

Dr. Guss particularly pointed out the dangers of larger and larger calves. Larger calves are associated with injuries to the reproductive tract. This can delay and even prevent altogether further conception, he stated.

He also noted that reproductive performance, including the tendency toward cystic ovaries, has been shown to be inherited.



Frank Reichard, herdsman at Atlantic Breeders, displays Char-Sam Prince Jewel, a 15-month old bull, one of the new bulls brought into service this summer. The bull is

sampled to be proven by daughters in members' herds. He was one of several bulls displayed at Atlantic on Parade Wednesday.

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Since most cystic cows are high producers the industry has been moving toward perpetuation of breeding weaknesses, he indicated.

Dr. Guss also emphasized that

feeding knowledge has not kept up with breeding know-how and with the changes in the production demands placed on cows.

"The most important single cause of infertility is directly

related to failure to manage and feed good cows correctly through the dry and early fresh period."

He pointed out that a study in England showed cows holding their weight or gaining weight at 60 days after freshing had a conception rate of 82 per cent at first service, while those losing weight had only a 42 per cent rate.

He also said that dairymen today, with larger herds and loose housing, don't know their animals as well as they did 30 years ago. This has "a tremendous bearing on what many investigators believe to be the prime cause of lower fertility — inability of the herdsman to detect heat."

While the diseases of 30 years ago have been mostly eliminated, Dr. Guss stated that "environmental infections have taken leadership in the causes of infertility." He stressed the importance of clean facilities and avoiding excessive use of hormones and "shots."

He also urged good records on herd fertility and reproduction, including separate records for each cow.

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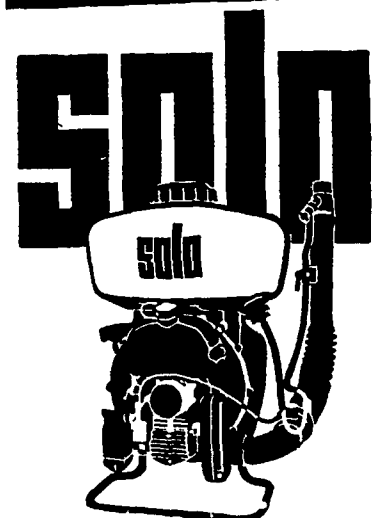
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